

ABSTRACTS

1. Meng SUN

Title: Negotiating Global and Local Ideas: Coffee Advertisement in Pre-1949 China

In the mid-19th century, various foreign products were introduced to China by the foreign residents of the treaty ports, Chinese students returning from abroad, and missionaries in inland areas. Coffee is one of these foreign products. Many scholars and their works have argued that objects carry meanings while they travel through time and space. Yet coffee, a brand-new product in late Qing and Republican China, its perceptions and meanings have never been carefully examined. This paper attempts to make some contribution to this barely touched field.

From the late nineteenth century, various coffee brands launched their advertisements in newspapers and magazines in China. This paper will examine the advertisements for coffee products in China launched in the first half of the twentieth century in Chinese and English media, for example, the *Shenbao* 申報, *the South China Morning Post*, and *the North China Herald*. Further, it will compare these advertisements' images, texts, and structures to the campaigns of the same brands launched in other countries, especially in the United States and Germany. As case studies, this paper will discuss the advertisements of several coffee brands in detail, for example, H. A. G. Coffee 合格咖啡, Maxwell House Coffee 美和咖啡, and C.P.C. Coffee (the later Shanghai Brand Coffee 上海牌咖啡). This project intends to discuss the production of knowledge and the circulation of ideas about coffee in a specific setting where power imbalance and confrontation between local and global were not the only forces shaping the relationship between China and the world pre-1949. Chinese translators,

publishers, traders, and mediators did not simply emulate the coffee advertisements in countries where coffee was consumed much more, and coffee advertisements developed longer and more mature. Instead, they chose the content of coffee advertisements strategically by leaving certain elements out and employing numerous local resources. The ongoing transformation and recreation of coffee advertisements in a Chinese context further kept shaping how coffee was perceived.

I argue that objects, such as coffee, come to embody values and ways of being both due to their global itinerary and local context. Moreover, objects transmit, transform, and dissolve ideas while traveling, mainly due to human configurations. In turn, ideas shape how objects are perceived and consumed locally. By combining the approaches of transcultural studies and global intellectual history, this study regards coffee advertisements as a "contact zone," which may be possible to bring out new perspectives and new conceptions to open up fresh possibilities of research.

2. João Henrique Roque de Almeida

Title: Empire of the Setting Sun-The impact of the Second World War over the Nikkei Community in Brazil and its diaspora identity

Despite the importance of the Second World War over the formation of the Nipo-Brazilian identity, a deafening silence continues to envelop this period as it became a self-imposed tabu within the Nikkei community. The Nikkei that witnessed those formative moments tried to forget the painful and shameful memories and instead preferred to emphasize the pioneer spirit of the first migrants or the solidarity that emerged inside the community after the war. As the contemporary narrative of the Japanese diaspora as an orderly and harmonious group that since their arrival aimed to have a new beginning and integrate into the Brazilian society hides the antagonism of the Brazilian elites and authorities, the persecution and the internal divisions of the community and the fratricidal violence that ensued. A split that divided the community between those who lived in the urban centers and those in the countryside, the old and well established migrants and the new arrivals, the soldiers and the prisoners of the state, and finally between those that believed that only victory was possible and those that accepted the reality of defeat. Hence, even after the Japanese surrendered, the war continued in Brazil, where the Nikkei community tore itself apart as those still loyal to the empire of the rising sun hunted down those that embraced the lands of the setting sun. Yet despite how thunderous these events were and how much they redefined the identity of this diaspora, the silence itself became part of the reconciliation of the community. Consequently, this essay deals with the question of to what extent did the Second World War impacted the Nikkei Community in Brazil and its diaspora identity through the close reading of primary sources like interviews and the diary of the medic turned lieutenant Massaki Udihara and relevant secondary sources from the Anglophone, Brazilian, and Japanese academia. Thus, showing that despite being far away from the battlefields, the conflict still had a profoundly

transcultural effect on the Japanese diaspora in Brazil and forced them to construct a new transcultural Nipo-Brazilian identity from the ashes of the old one.

3. Matthew Fidler

Title: The Myth of Modernity: European Diplomacy Discovers Itself in China

The challenge faced by China in the 19th century was the same challenge that many

non-European countries faced: they needed to adopt modern European innovations or be conquered. However, European nations did not invent modernity in a sudden bout of inspiration. They drew upon centuries of European tradition which only gradually evolved into the practices and norms that we consider “modern” today. Contemporary scholars tend to view modernity as something of a complete package, with several of its key concepts and practices emerging fully developed and articulated. This has created a mistaken impression that modernity was a series of pre-planned reforms rather than an awkward process of gradually changing expectations.

This paper looks specifically at the rapidly modernising diplomatic practices of 19th century European countries and places them in contrast with the more “traditional” practices of the Qing tributary system. Several European concepts are important parts of international political thought to this day: the inviolability of ambassadors, permanent diplomatic contact between rulers, and formal equality between nations. By comparison, the Qing tributary system's use of ceremony to regulate relationships and its tight control of international trade as a political tool can seem like relics of an ancient past. However, without this Qing diplomatic order acting as an “other” to be fought against, the modern European framework of sovereignty and diplomacy could not have been built.

Three events were crucial in the development of European diplomacy into its modern form: the 1787 Colonel Cathcart Embassy to China, the 1793 Lord McCartney Embassy to China, and the 1816 Lord Amherst Embassy to China. An examination of these events provides valuable insight into the transformation of European expectations about diplomacy with China and understandings about

their own political values. All three diplomatic overtures were premised on the fundamentally flawed notion that the values and concerns of China's Qing rulers were identical to the mindset of European leaders at the time. British decision makers believed that Qing leadership was interested in receiving the benefits of British trade and technologies, but that the Emperor was being lied to and misled by local officials in Canton. It was only after repeated failure that the British government became aware that China was actually operating under a fundamentally different set of values and expectations which simply could not accommodate British diplomatic traditions.

It was this slow realization which led to an important shift in the attitude of British elites: trade and diplomacy with China was essentially impossible because it could not be done without an unacceptable blow being dealt to Britain's self-image. This change of attitude actually better reflected the opinions of the wider British public; whose satirists had long derided diplomatic relations with China as humiliating affronts to the dignity and sovereignty of Britain. Modern diplomacy's preoccupation with sovereignty, ceremonial equality, and permanent formal embassies is a direct result of Britain insisting upon these European traditions rather than accommodating the norms of Qing China during this crucial era.

4. Suk Man YIP

Title: Inherit the Vertical, Transplant the Horizontal: The Study of the Co-creating Works by Kwan Nam and Wong Wucius in *Hong Kong Times, Repulse Bay* (1960-62)

It is a study about the transformation of traditional Chinese Poetry and Art into modern Chinese poems and paintings and the role of official newspaper supplements in exploring experimental creation on new art and literature in early 1960s' Sinophone regions.

In Modern Chinese Poetry, there was an argument about “vertical inheritance” 縱的繼承 and “horizontal transplantation” 橫的移植. The former means new poetry should absorb nutrients from Chinese classical literature; the latter means creating new poetry should learn from the West. The argument heated up in the 1950s. When Taiwanese poets continued arguing which path modernist poetry should follow, two Hong Kong contributors, the poet Kwan Nam 崑南 and the painter Wong Wucius 王無邪, have chosen the third – combining both streams in their 13 co-creating works composed of modernist poems and paintings published in the KMT official newspaper supplement (*fukan* 副刊), *Hong Kong Times, Repulse Bay* 香港時報·淺水灣,¹ in the early 1960s.² The 13 creations are modernist works but mixed with elements of traditional Chinese poetry and paintings. Kwan's poems are profoundly influenced by Western poets such as T. S. Eliot but also show the link with traditional Chinese literature, such as quotations from classical Chinese poetry and stories. Wong's paintings are a mixture of Western modernist and traditional Chinese paintings. Although he widely applied Western drawing skills, such as using geometric figures to construct images, the structure of his landscape drawings followed traditional Chinese painting, with an extremely high mountain implying noble sentiment.

Moreover, the creation process was inspired by the response poems in traditional Chinese paintings. Kwan and Wong did not create the works together but separately, with their most familiar medium responding to each other's ideas.³ In the past, scholars wrote poems on the paintings to express their

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- 1 *Hong Kong Times* was the only KMT official newspaper issued in Hong Kong. It started publishing on August 4, 1948, and was suspended in 1993, four years before the handover of Hong Kong to mainland China.
 - 2 It was the period when the KMT promoted itself as the “Democratic Showcase” 民主櫥窗 and the best regime of ruling China. At the same time, mainland China still struggled with the Great Famine, which caused millions of people to become refugees. *Repulse Bay* was reformed from February 15, 1960, to June 30, 1962, for more than two years and four months. The reform was implemented by Liu Yichang 劉以鬯, an experienced supplement editor and a prominent writer of Modern Literature. He was appointed as the Editor-in-Chief of *Repulse Bay* and asked to compile a supplement with new ideas by the board of the newspaper in 1960. It was not the first time that Liu became the Editor-in-Chief of *Repulse Bay*. He was in the same position in the early 1950s but was fired later because he insisted on publishing new novels and poems only and rejected adopting the old poems written by Ma Ng 馬五, another editor of the newspaper and a prominent poet. Therefore, the board knew that Liu was fond of Modern Art and Literature when re-appointing him as the Editor-in-Chief of *Repulse Bay* in 1960. It was clear that converting *Repulse Bay* into a modernist literary supplement was also their plan to cooperate with the KMT propaganda project.
 - 3 In the interview with Liu Yichang, he said it was Kwan's and Wong's idea to co-create those 13 works. Sometimes, Kwan composed a poem, and then Wong drew a picture to echo his words; sometimes, Wong drew first, and then

feelings after reading them. Some may respond to others' poems written on the paintings decades or even hundreds of years ago, starting a trans-temporal-and-spatial but one-way conversation, waiting for the subsequent responses, which may appear another decade or hundred years later. That was a game between scholars that only very few upper-classed intellectuals, who were eligible to read the precious paintings, could join. In the early 1960s, Kwan and Wong transformed this high-ranked scholars' game into an open-to-public discussion, which attracted contributors and readers from Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Asia to respond.⁴ The interchange of ideas on art and literature no longer only existed within the elites' circle but also allowed the majority to participate. It also broke through the wall between Taiwan and Hong Kong built by Martial Law in 1949, connecting their art and literary circles through art creations. Why did the experiment of transforming traditional Chinese poetry and art into modernist ones successfully fulfil in an KMT official newspaper supplement issued in Hong Kong but not in Taiwan? Why did Kwan and Wong adopt the creation process of response poems and start the dialogues on art and literature in a newspaper supplement? Their works inspired writers and artists to have conversations by co-creating works in newspapers and magazines. Works composed of paintings and poems/prose can still be found in magazines such as *Ming Pao Weekly*, but whose target readers are intellectuals and the middle-and-upper-classed. Does it mean the door opening to the ordinary people was closed again?

The paper analyses the artists' exploration of Modern Chinese Poetry and Painting, such as combining elements from traditional Chinese and Western Modern Art and Literature and transforming traditional Chinese Poetry and Art into Modern Chinese poems and paintings. It also investigates the role of *Repulse Bay* on changing the ecological environment of art and literary creations, helping the development of Modern Art and Literature in the 1960s' Sinophone regions.

5. Yushu QIAO

Title: Western Resources and Ya Xian's Poems ——Take the First Volume from *Ya Xian's Collection of Poems* as an Example

Taiwan modernist poetry emerged in the 1950s is a typical product of the integration of Chinese and Western literature and culture. Take Ya Xian's poems for example, this representative modernist poet has been influenced by western poetry, religion, music, painting and drama, from which he successfully draws inspiration for his writing. The paper takes the first volume from *Ya Xian's Collection of Poems* as an example, and analyzes western influence on Ya Xian's writing by close reading from three aspects. The first part discusses Ya Xian's imitation of Rainer Maria Rilke, mainly comparing Ya Xian's "Spring Day" with Rilke's "Autumn Day", as well as Ya Xian's "Song" with Rilke's "The Serious Moment". The second part analyzes Ya Xian's utilization of the Bible, western music and painting in his poems. For example, there are similarities between *Book of Revelations* and Ya Xian's "Song", or between Achille-Claude Debussy's music and Ya Xian's "Spring Day". The third part discusses Ya Xian's influence from symbolism, surrealism, western drama and novel. The influence of surrealism enables Ya Xian to join images of East and West together, while with the help of symbolism, he reconciles the irrationality and sensibility of surrealism. The influence from drama and novel is reflected in the use of punctuation marks, which makes his poems objectified and have the characteristics of novel and drama. Finally, the paper points out that when using these western resources, Ya Xian combines native experience with them together, which is a way of exploration for Chinese modern poetry. In a word, western resources have enriched the spiritual dimension of Taiwan modernist poetry, and Taiwan modernist poetry also provides valuable Chinese experience for world poetry writing.

6. Ruoxi FENG

Title: Understanding Identity, Symbols, and Contexts in Modern Chinese Science Fictions: A Transcultural Analysis of *Huang Chao*

Chinese science fiction was born in the early 20th century and has a history of a hundred years. As a product of industrial civilization, science fiction entered China in the late Qing Dynasty with the prosperity of western scientific and culture, and science fiction literature has since become a branch of Chinese literature. It spread advanced western scientific knowledge through fantastic storylines in a novel mode that is popular with the public and has been translated and spread by many progressive people. And the early translation of western science fiction directly contributed to the birth of Chinese science fiction. During the more than 100 years of localization of science fiction, the creation of modern Chinese science fiction has flourished, and at the same time, the works of a group of outstanding Chinese science fiction writers have been disseminated overseas. Contrary to the general focus on translation, posthuman, and ecocriticism of modern Chinese science fiction, this paper argues that these works are by no means merely the product of developments in the global economic system and sociocultural environment. Instead, modern Chinese science fiction, in the spatial, social and cultural context of Chinese narrative and virtual reality, is combined into a symbolic installation that focuses on the multiple tension and contradictions of tradition and modernity, ancestor worship and technology worship, self and other, conservatism and alienation, human and posthuman. As a representative work of modern Chinese science fiction, Chen Qiufan's work — *Huang Chao* won the Gold Award for Best Novel at the Xingyun Awards for Global Chinese Science Fiction in 2013, and was published by Tor Books, the North American largest fantasy literature publisher in 2019, promoting Chinese modern science fiction literature head to the World. Based on the globalization and local environment of China, it narrates the ecological destruction,

traditional clan conflicts, and the changes in China's social order brought about by capital and technology through an image of a bottom-class woman in the third world. Therefore, this paper takes *Huang Chao* as an example, from the perspective of transcultural research, to investigate the contradiction between traditional and modern identities, the changes of traditional Chinese power discourse, and the collision of Chinese cultural environment and heterogeneous cultural environment in the context of frequent interaction between humans and technology in *Huang Chao* Contradictions, changes in traditional Chinese authority structure, and the collision of Chinese cultural context and heterogeneous cultural context, and explore how modern Chinese science fiction literature creates works with truly revolutionary identities, social relationships, and ways of thinking.

7. Xinru WANG

Title: The Technology of Writing and the Formation of the Mahāyāna: with a discussion on the encounter between Buddhism and early medieval China

Since first published in 1982, Walter J. Ong's seminal masterpiece "Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the word" has exerted great influence on a wide range of research fields. The realm of Buddhist Studies is without exception, especially when it comes to the role writing has played during the formative phase of the Mahāyāna. It doesn't mean that before the light shed by Ong, no scholar in that area noticed the intimate relationship between writing and the Mahāyāna. In fact, there are. For example, in his 1975 article, Schopen proposes his book-cult hypothesis, assuming that written scriptures function as the very institutional bases in the rise of the Mahāyāna. That is to say, it is the book rather than the stūpa¹ that has provided a separate center free of orthodox interference for like-minded individuals to gather together. However, it is noticeable that Schopen regards the book as a mere medium in a physical sense without questioning the rich message hidden behind that medium.

Fifteen years after Schopen's work, inspired by Ong's theory on how the shift from orality to literacy has changed human consciousness, starting from Gombrich (1990), more and more scholars-to name a few, Lopez (1995), McMahan (1998), Harrison (2003) Tuladhar-Douglas (2009)-endeavor to build their pictures of early Mahāyāna with an emphasis on its entanglement with writing.

Based upon the preceding investigations, this paper aims at examining how the technology of writing has contributed to the emergence of the Mahāyāna by applying Ong's theory in a more systematic way. How was the Buddha transformed from material to immaterial while the Dharma from immaterial to material under the power of writing? Why did the traces of early Mahāyānists

¹ See Hirakawa (1963) for the stupa-cult hypothesis.

scatter everywhere but concentrate nowhere? When we enquire into the transformations in the “three jewels”, another essential facet of the Mahāyāna would also appear, that is, it is an attempt to overcome the spiritual and doctrinal crisis caused by the absence of the historical Buddha Śākyamuni. Engaging themselves more with books in their private realms rather than with oral teachings in the monastic community, early Mahāyānists found a way to see their own Buddhas, to realize a kind of “interior transcendence” that is pumped up by the power of faith from inward. Likewise, in early medieval China, a time period when the old value system became unreliable with the demise of the Han dynasty, Chinese literati struggled to seek a way to achieve self-realization without recourse to the collapsing external authority. It is exactly the time when Buddhism began to gain some power in China, a country with a long tradition of writing, and then formed an inseparable part of Chinese philosophical landscape. Seen from a transcultural perspective, the encounter between Buddhism and early medieval China could be viewed as a mutual acceptance going beyond both narratives of “the sinicization of Buddhism” and “Buddhism conquered China.”

8. Jonas Schmid

Title: Looking at Tradition through a Modern Lens: Depictions of Confucianism in German High School History Textbooks

China's rise on the global stage in recent years has also led to the inclusion of Chinese history in the history curricula of some regions of Germany. Thus the amount of teaching materials on Chinese history has recently risen as well. How do these teaching materials and textbooks portray China? Drawing on high school history textbooks from five German federal states published in recent years by different publishing houses the paper focusses on the depiction of Confucius and Confucianism as a case study. In these textbooks Confucianism is portrayed as oppressive, unchanging throughout its existence, as well as influential up until today.

The textual depictions, a selective choice of quotes from classical Confucian works, as well as tasks directed at students in these textbooks give a very skewed representation of the main tenets of Confucius' teachings: e.g. being obedient towards one's parents and ruler and thus bringing order to society. Confucianism is thus implicitly portrayed as an oppressive ideology—an idea that as is shown harks back to Western 19th-century understandings of China and Confucianism. Drawing on Fabian Heubel's critique of Western portrayals of Confucianism as conformist (i.e. oppressive compared to classical European philosophies), I show how a transcultural approach allows us to rethink these depictions.

In contrast to transcultural perspectives who define cultures as being constantly in flux and malleable by different influences, the German textbooks depict Confucianism as one single strand of ideas that once formed by Confucius strongly influenced all of later Chinese (imperial) history. They do not mention or do not give details about later developments such as the advent of Buddhism (and Daoism) or Neoconfucianist reinterpretations of the classical Confucian canon.

Furthermore, the textbooks claim that Confucianism has deeply left its imprint on Chinese culture and continues to influence Chinese society up until this day. I reckon that this homogeneous depiction of an unchanging Confucianism similarly stems from 19th century ideas of cultures as stable homogeneous entities unchanged by time. These concepts of culture are deeply intertwined with modernity itself. Showing how depictions in recent German history textbooks are still very much influenced by these 19th-century paradigms, the necessity of transcultural approaches in history teaching and textbook writing becomes evident. Thus, ideas for transcultural teaching of Confucianism in history classrooms are introduced.

9. Kai WANG

Title: The Definition of Videogame: Normative Amelioration?

The concept of the videogame is usually defined in a descriptive way including essential and anti-essential approaches. In this paper, we originally propose a normative approach to define the videogame according to conceptual engineering. We try discussing what the concept *should* be rather than its sufficient and necessary conditions. We hold the concept of the videogame should be ameliorated in this way because it can deal with some social issues especially social prejudice to the videogame group. Our conclusion is that the videogame should be defined as multi-function and value neutral.

10. Yawen HU

Title: Primitivism-in-common: Chinese Primitive Art in A Transcultural Perspective

This paper expands the category of “primitivism” in art history. As one of the significant concepts of aesthetic modernism, primitivism refers to the appreciation and imitation of cultural products and practices that are perceived to be “primitive.” It usually points to the radical reevaluation in the early twentieth century during which a generation of modern artists in Paris and other continental cities rediscovered and reconfigured the African, Native American, and Oceanian artifacts in ethnological museums. However, this dominant narrative has been criticized as problematic because of the colonial logic behind it and its underlying Eurocentric bias that modernism is a one-way process flowing from the Occident. To challenge the “West versus the Rest of the World” paradigm, Partha Mitter has emphasized, “Global ‘critical modernity’ has multilateral and multi-axial origins and reasons; its global impact forces us to revise a simple notion of cultural influence as a one-way flow of ideas from the West to other cultures.” Art historian Monica Juneja further suggested to reexamine modernism “as a global, transcultural process,” delving into localities and “reveal[ing] synchronicity and coevalness” by using multiple scales. Accordingly, transcultural modernism requires us to investigate intersections, entanglements and divergences of the “connected ensemble of resonant microhistories.” Then, how to rethink primitivism as part of transcultural modernism rather than a Eurocentric category?

My paper probes into Chinese artists’ practice of primitive art and situates their practices in a transcultural context by questioning: How the primitive became creative energies for Chinese artists? What are the individual stories of Chinese primitive art? What are the differences and connections between Chinese primitive art and other practices in the same theme? Ultimately, what new opinions can be generated if we reverse our view from the non-European

perspective – here, the Chinese perspective? To answer the questions, I investigate two Chinese artists – Pang Xunqin (庞薰琹 1906–1985) and Zhou Xiaoping (周小平 1960–), whose practices on primitive art were respectively in the wartime and the post-Mao era. Through visual analysis and a transcultural comparison, I suggest that although Chinese primitive art has similarities with European aesthetic primitivism, its temporal, geographic and historical singularities should occupy a unique position in the constellation. Therefore, I further employ Barbara Mittler’s terminological model “-in-common” to manifest the multiple sites of primitive art in the constellation and the uniqueness of the Chinese artistic practice. In subordinating European to *a* primitivism – instead of *the* primitivism, I also demonstrate that the development of aesthetic modernism was non-linear and heterogeneous emerged in numerous sites across the globe.

11. Piaoyu SHI

Title: The acceptance and innovation of Rilke's thought in Feng Zhi's *Wu Zixu*

Under the influence of Western culture and Chinese traditional thought, modern poet Feng Zhi's works present a profound philosophical space. He explicitly mentioned that he was inspired by the German-language writer Rene Maria Rilke when he wrote his historical novel *Wu zixu*. Under the influence of Rilke, Feng Zhi broke the traditional pattern of strong stories in traditional historical novels when writing *Wu Zixu*. He narrated the stories and inner thoughts of the protagonist on the way to his death with the style of poetic prose culture, and integrated a series of reflections on "loneliness", "death" and "life" into the poetic atmosphere of the novel. In the novel, the intervention of heterogeneous elements represented by Rilke realized a "meeting" of Chinese and Western poetics, and confirmed the borderless nature of art and thought, as well as the intercommunication of human culture in their roots.

It is worth noting that Feng Zhi himself did not fully accept Rilke's mysterious and negative metaphysical ideas when he accepted Rilke's thoughts. Instead, he reflected on the social and political environment of China and the living state of Chinese people at that time by paying attention to the real world, and transformed the negative attitude locally. These changes reflect Feng Zhi's concern for the social state and political environment, which makes his works more realistic.

Taking the novel *Wu Zixu* as an example, this paper tries to analyze Feng Zhi's creative acceptance of Rilke's literary creation principles and philosophical thoughts from three aspects: poetic and contemplative nature of the work's creation, loneliness of the subject image and overall atmosphere, and the novel's reflection on the philosophical proposition of "death".

12. Yan YANG

Title: The Consciousness of Witness in Mu Dan's Poems: Taking *The Battle of Gods and Demons*, *Revelation*, *The Forest: A Demon*, and *The Deformation of God* as Examples

In the history of Western philosophy, testimony is a philosophical concept closely related to epistemology, and the related literature of testimony, as a special category in the tradition of literary testimony, emphasizes not only the literary quality of works, but also the identity of the author as an eyewitness and the relevance of the subject matter, and its flourishing and themes are closely related to the outbreak of wars, massacres and other humanitarian catastrophes in the twentieth century.

As the Jiu Ye School poet deeply influenced by Western modernist poetry, Mu Dan's poetic dramas, such as *The Battle of Gods and Demons*, *Revelation*, *The Forest: A Demon* and *The Deformation of God* are related to significant historical events in the twentieth century, especially in *The Forest: A Demon*, *Revelation*, and *The Deformation of God*, Mu Dan draws on W. H. Auden's stance on the responsibility of poetry to bear witness from his own life experience. As a survivor of a humanitarian catastrophe, from the Hu Kang Valley Mountains experiences of the Chinese Expeditionary Forces during the Yunnan and Burma anti-Japanese war to his Potential Writing period in the 1960s and 1970s, Mu Dan did not excessively vent his emotions or faithfully imitate historical events in his poems, but adopts the form of poetic drama, dissolving the author's authority through dramatic conflict, suspense, monologue and dialogue, and integrating strong self-reflection in his testimony about history. The different perspectives and distances between the panoramic testimony of the bystander and the internal testimony of the witness reflect the changes in his poetic style and compositional techniques, creating a tension between Mu Dan's outwardly reticent image and the inner witnessing subject. Underneath the seemingly reticent and detached appearance of Mu Dan, there is not only the

thought of witnessing the existence itself, but also the feeling of testifying for other witnesses.

Mu Dan's poetry, as a witness of the times, reflects the close connection between the personal experience of witness and poetic experience. He not only integrates the creative idea of Western modernist poetry represented by Auden and T.S. Eliot, but also responds to Derrida's thinking on the issue of Paul Celan's poetic witness, and attempts to subvert, disrupt, and displace the aesthetic tendency of authority and control, revealing the distortion of atrocity to the framework of language interpretation, thus rising to the broad horizon of speaking for humanity as Eliot put it.